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Future Challenges for US Intelligence

The intelligence profession is on the cusp, so to speak, between eras. We have ended, over the last year or so, the largest growth in US intelligence in history. At the same time, some major new investments still are not in our inventory or totally paid for. The fiscal stringency now setting in will make the tradeoffs for resources even starker. And concurrently, US policy and military commitments and needs abroad are increasing--not remaining approximately static. Finally, the march of technology--as well as foreign espionage against the US--is proceeding apace. Major changes are in process in key areas of our world, from the USSR to South Africa and from Europe to Japan. These factors will increase the strain on capabilities that are already pressed by expectations of support and a very long list of requirements. [REDACTED]

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While this nation's Intelligence Community has many strengths and is much more capable than 10 years ago, it also is true that we face some daunting challenges over the next 10 years. The challenges that will drive intelligence activities in the 1990s cross a wide range of concerns that will force us to look at problems from several perspectives as we work toward enhanced performance and, ideally, solutions. There are essentially three major categories of issues that we will have to deal with:

- o substantive areas like arms control and developments in the Soviet Union;
- o management and infrastructure issues like the composition of our work force and our processing and analysis capabilities; and
- o a third set of concerns that centers on our role in support of policymakers and the policy process. [REDACTED]

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The single most important task of all is upon us right now as we build our budget for FY 1990 and beyond: to maintain, with the help of our executive and legislative leaders, at least some modest fiscal momentum against the challenges we face in a rapidly changing world, lest a serious mismatch develop in the early 1990s between our capabilities and the work our leaders ask us to perform. [REDACTED]

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Substantive Challenges

The Soviet Union The Community must be able to provide comprehensive and timely collection and analysis on the turbulent political, economic, and military changes under way in the Soviet Union under General Secretary

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Gorbachev, and as a result of his more dynamic foreign policy. New issues, such as the rise of nationalities and open dissension, must be addressed, as well as traditional threat areas. Efforts to track the Soviet military threat, as it modernizes with new weaponry, will have the greatest impact on intelligence resources. Advanced Soviet weapons systems will be of particular importance, including directed energy weapons, the effect of low observables technology (on both offensive and defensive systems), and the possibility of breakthroughs in new technologies. Continued emphasis on mobile strategic weapons will also pose major requirements.

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Better insight into political and economic questions will require enhanced human and open source intelligence capabilities, including collection and exploitation. We will also be challenged by increasing amounts of information available from the Soviet Union, which will particularly affect our ability to exploit open sources.

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Arms Control At the same time that it must deal with requirements tied to the Soviet threat, the Community will also have to accommodate requirements springing from the Soviet presentation of a more benign face to the outside world. The Community must continue to address current treaty monitoring requirements and assist negotiations for potential arms control agreements. Monitoring a prospective START Treaty will require additional collection and analysis capabilities and will have a significant impact on intelligence resources. Detecting and locating any illegal mobile missiles, determining throw weight and the number of warheads, and counting nondeployed treaty-limited nuclear weapons and launchers will be especially important.

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Beyond strategic weapons, other areas that pose potentially significant requirements include conventional forces, especially given heightened concern about the post-INF conventional balance in Europe, and biological and chemical weapons in the USSR and Third World.

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Finally, monitoring requirements associated with nuclear testing constraints will also affect resources, especially monitoring the yields of tests if thresholds are reduced, and detecting low yield tests if the number of tests is limited or if tests are banned entirely.

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International Economics The Community must be able to support policymakers who will be attempting to address a variety of economic topics in an increasingly interdependent economic world. Debt burdens, trade relations,

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and issues of competitiveness will dominate requirements. Insights and data will be necessary on the potential effects of the creation of a unified internal market in the European Community, the continued growth of already formidable Japanese economic power, and the role of newly industrialized economies. Early warning of trade disputes and information to support negotiations will also affect intelligence resources. The Pacific Rim countries will be of special importance as will the need for data on fiscal and monetary policies of major economic partners to support the greater economic policy coordination that will accompany interdependence. [REDACTED]

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Counterterrorism The Community must have the ability to closely support counterterrorist planning and operations. State support of terrorism will continue to be used as a means to political ends. Successful terrorist operations will generate high visibility and public impact that will create pressures for response. Human intelligence will be especially important. [REDACTED]

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Counternarcotics The Community must have a strong capability to collect and analyze information on narcotics production and trafficking, traffickers' financial networks, and foreign government attitudes towards the problem. Demands for policy support on this topic will be especially strong in the next five years, with particular emphasis on support for counternarcotics operations. Important resource questions will center on the nature and extent of basic capabilities that must be developed to play an increased role in this area. This will require a clear appreciation by policymakers of the contributions that foreign intelligence can make to the effort to curb drug trafficking. It will also require the Intelligence Community to have an explicit understanding of the mission and tasks it is asked to perform. [REDACTED]

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Third World Instability The Community must expand its abilities to monitor and assess developments in key Third World countries to respond to policymakers' concerns. Introduction of sophisticated military systems will affect regional balances of power and endemic instability and economic difficulty will pose diverse threats to US interests. Collection and analysis must be sufficient to ensure that changes and challenges are detected early and that information is available on critical countries to support contingency planning. A particular need is the development of comprehensive data bases; other problems will be posed by the growing sophistication of Third World communications systems. We must also be able to anticipate the force and sweep of social and psychological movements, such as those that gave rise to the Islamic Revolution. [REDACTED]

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Proliferation The Community must have a well coordinated collection and analytical capability targeted against proliferation of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and sophisticated delivery systems. The spread of ballistic missile technology and systems to Third World nations will expand collection and production requirements, and the need for a capability to detect new chemical and biological agents will become increasingly important.

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Concern will continue to grow over detecting production and transfer of advanced weapons to the following countries:

- o Nuclear--South Africa, Israel, Argentina, Brazil, North Korea, South Korea, India, and Pakistan;
- o Chemical and biological--primarily the Middle East; and,

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Infrastructure and Management Challenges

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Information Handling and Dissemination The Community must improve its ability to share information and to disseminate it in sufficient time to meet perishable needs. Requirements will stem from the need to handle massive amounts of data, to improve interaction between data bases, and to meet the timeliness challenges posed by demands for targeting support and other needs associated with the increasing mobility of strategic forces.

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Counterintelligence and Security The Community must continue to improve its program for physical, technical, and personnel security and counterintelligence.

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Survivability The Community must address continuing difficulties in achieving appropriate survivability of intelligence assets to support both the National Command Authority and military commanders during situations ranging from natural disasters through nuclear war. Requirements will be based on the SecDef-DCI survivability strategy, with particular emphasis given to NFIP components that have a critical intelligence warfighting support role. [REDACTED]

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People and Support Infrastructure To respond successfully to challenges, the Community must maintain its skilled work force and an infrastructure to provide secure work spaces, modern communications and computer facilities, and general logistical support. Principal requirements will involve the attraction and retention of a work force with the necessary mix of skills to deal with changing technologies and increasingly complex targets. These skills include scientists, engineers, mathematicians, linguists, cryptanalysts, and acquisition specialists. [REDACTED]

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Policy Support Challenges

Relations with Policymakers and the Congress The Community must enhance its dialogue with the Executive Branch policymakers that it supports, and with the Congress, as resource pressures grow. There are two important aspects to this issue. The first involves the need to ensure that requirements for support are thoroughly understood by intelligence activities. The second is to give decisionmakers and the Congress a clear sense of intelligence capabilities and possible contributions. It will be particularly important to point out the serious imbalance between demands placed on intelligence and the Community's capabilities to satisfy them. The growing complexity and evolutionary development of intelligence targets contributes to this imbalance as does the relatively austere funding outlook for intelligence programs, particularly those intended to modernize capabilities or develop new initiatives. Two distinct ways of approaching the imbalance exist. The first is to increase funding for intelligence activities to allow credible treatment of high-priority problems. The second is to raise the risks, by reducing expectations and requirements, a course that would be based on a reassessment of national interests and intelligence needs. Either approach will require a strong educational role by intelligence managers to ensure that decisionmakers have a clear picture of the Community's capabilities, strengths, and weaknesses. [REDACTED]

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Public Expectations for Intelligence The Community must continue to demonstrate its management competence to a public that is growing more knowledgeable of intelligence activities, but without harming our sources and methods. For example, intelligence issues and questions will be increasingly

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visible as the public debate occurs about the USSR's intentions and as prospective arms control treaties are negotiated. Public confidence is essential to maintain a basis for support of intelligence activities and resources and the Community must meet public expectations of professionalism and skill. [REDACTED]

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Support to Military Activities The Community must improve its ability to support a wide range of military activities, ranging from the provision of S&T intelligence for weapons development to support for the planning and conduct of military operations. Particular demands will flow from the need to make intelligence more operationally relevant and more readily available to military users, with emphasis on the timeliness of required data. Low intensity conflicts, crises, and contingency planning will add to requirements for use of national intelligence assets to support the Unified and Specified Commanders, creating additional demands on tasking, management, and reporting systems. [REDACTED]

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The Research Institute of America, Inc.
Research Institute Building
90 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10011-7696

September 9, 1988

(212) 337-4157

Leo Cherne

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Honorable Robert M. Gates
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Bob:

Happily, as a member of Freedom House, I routinely receive FREEDOM AT ISSUE. The current copy just came in and I was delighted to see your article as the lead article. I have phoned them about sending you copies, as well as additional ones for me. Therefore, in the meantime, I can let you have my copy.

Incidentally, the PFIAB meeting will, I understand, find you out of the country. I have been trying to reach you in the hope that you will have reached a conclusion in connection with the panel which PFIAB had recommended for a particular type of dispute. I had mentioned possible candidate for such a panel.

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When he learned of it, he made a wiser suggestion. The former Attorney General would bring to that small group the rare combination of excellent legal knowledge and a particular intimate and sophisticated knowledge of intelligence. He would, as a result of that combination, not look at any particular disagreement as a legal one.

I will miss seeing you at the next meeting.

Warm regards.

Cordially,

Leo Cherne

LC/mlg
Encl.